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OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21

Letter dated 15 April 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith Tokyo Declaration 1997, which was adopted at the Global Partnership Summit on Environment held in Tokyo on 24 March 1997 hosted by the Global Environmental Action and the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex** circulated as a document of the fifth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21.

(Signed) Hisashi OWADA
Permanent Representative

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** The annex is being issued in the language of submission only.

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ANNEX

Tokyo Declaration 1997, adopted on 24 March 1997
at the Global Partnership Summit on Environment

1. The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was a landmark event of great significance. At Rio all nations of the world, at the highest political level and at an unprecedented level of participation, made an historic commitment to promote—both nationally and internationally—policies and actions aimed at the achievement of balanced and mutually reinforcing approaches to the goals of economic growth, social equity and the protection of the environment. This commitment has redirected the path of world development towards a more sustainable track. The UNCED commitment to sustainable development, as articulated in Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration, aims to secure a better life for the present and broader opportunities for humanity's future generations.

2. Progress towards sustainable development depends upon global partnerships—partnerships among nations, among international organizations, between public and private institutions and between all levels of government and civil society, including parliamentarians, citizens' groups, consumer organizations and the media.

3. A number of promising changes have occurred at the international and national levels since the Rio Earth Summit. The goals of sustainable development are beginning to be integrated in national and international policy-making as well as into the activities of international organizations. National Sustainable Development Councils have been established in many developed and developing countries and their number is growing. Hundreds of cities and communities worldwide are advancing sustainability at the local level. Numerous non-governmental organizations, citizens' groups and private enterprises are taking action to translate the promise of Rio into a reality.

4. Yet despite these positive trends, overall progress towards sustainable development is still very limited. Poverty, malnutrition, inadequate health and education services combined with other burning social and economic problems continue to be an everyday reality for hundreds of millions of the world's people. Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption continue to prevail in most developed countries as well as in most economic sectors, and are being carried to the developing world along with industrialization. At the same time too many of the world's people still lack sometimes even basic access to productive resources and environmentally sound technologies. Increased private capital flows to the developing countries, resulting from continued globalization of the world economy and liberalization of trade and investment, are not necessarily consistent with the goals of sustainable development. Moreover, a large number of developing countries have yet to benefit from any increase of such flows. The global environment, and most of its natural components, continue to deteriorate.

5. Such a situation calls for a renewed urgency that all partners energize their individual and joint actions to accelerate progress towards sustainable development and to fully implement their commitments made at UNCED.

6. Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration maintain their significance as humanity approaches the next millenium. The forthcoming 1997 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly that will carry out a comprehensive review and appraisal of progress achieved since UNCED offers and important opportunity for the international community to reinforce its commitment to sustainable development, enhance political momentum for the implementation of Agenda 21 and of other outcomes of UNCED, and to promote further global partnership for sustainable development. It is expected that the Special Session will result in the adoption of concrete decisions and specific targets aimed at acceleration of progress towards sustainable development and identification of strategic priorities for the future. Special attention should be given to strategically important sectors such as transportation, land, forests, biodiversity and water. Population dynamics should be taken into account.

7. Energy is an area of particular concern not only in terms of pollution and CO_2 emissions, but also from the point of view of long term sustainability for future economic development. The current patterns of production and consumption of energy are particularly inequitable in light of the fact that populations in the vast parts of the world still lack access to adequate energy services, relying solely on inferior biomass fuels which produce serious environmental and health impacts. Integrated policy debate and action to address all aspects of the energy problem and all sources of energy in the context of sustainable development are necessary both at the national level and within the United Nations.

8. Global partnership for sustainable development requires a stronger and more effective system of national and international institutions. The participants of the Global Partnership Summit on Environment expressed their hope that the Special Session of the General Assembly will give consideration of this issue. Attention should be also given to the strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme and its eventual transformation into a "Global Environmental Organization."

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9. In follow-up to the agendas of the two previous meetings held in Tokyo in 1992 and 1994, the Global Partnership Summit focused only on three key aspects of sustainable development—namely financial issues, technology transfer, and changing consumption and production patterns. In this context the meeting also considered matters related to science/technology and information/telecommunications. It was felt that all of the above issues are closely interrelated. The participants in the Global Partnership Summit invite the Special Session of the UN General Assembly, as well as all other entities, to consider recommendations contained in the present Declaration as a contribution to the 1997 review of Agenda 21 and its further implementation .

10. The participants underscored the importance of the forthcoming third meeting of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Kyoto in December 1997. They expressed their expectation that all countries at this meeting will commit themselves to concrete actions aimed at effective implementation of the Convention. This should include the adoption of a protocol containing specific targets, timetables and instruments for implementation. For the further development of the Convention, due account should be taken of the common but differentiated responsibilities and the

principle of equity as expressed by per capita emissions over a long period.

11. The participants expressed their appreciation to Global Environmental Action for hosting the meeting and its proactive approach and commitment to furthering international dialogue and fostering partnerships for sustainable development. They also paid tribute to the Government and people of Japan for their continued leadership and commitment at the highest level in UNCED follow-up.

12. The participants underscored the importance of regional cooperation aimed at the implementation of Agenda 21. Such cooperation is essential for supporting countries to achieve sustainable development, and at the same time provides an important contribution to progress at the global level.

13. It was also suggested that the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly give consideration to appropriate modalities for a ten-year review of post-UNCED progress in the year 2002.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

A. Financial Issues

14. Mobilization of new financial resources and the redirection of existing financial flows towards the achievement of sustainable development objectives is essential to secure further progress. It is time to realize that the cost of inaction outweighs the cost of action.

15. Agenda 21 recognized that its implementation should be financed by domestic public and private means of each nation. However, developing countries' national efforts towards sustainable development need to be supported through enhanced international cooperation, including the implementation of UNCED commitments regarding the provision of new and additional financial resources. Furthermore, it is important to promote policies and conditions aimed at ensuring that all financial flows including foreign direct investment are consistent with the long-term goals of sustainable development.

16. Official Development Assistance (ODA) continues to play an important role in promoting sustainable development in most developing countries, particularly in supporting capacity-building and those social sectors and environmental activities which do not attract adequate private funds. ODA is particularly vital for the Least Developed Countries. It is essential that:

- developed countries reverse the recent downward trend in ODA and fully honor their commitments made at UNCED;

- donor support for aid programs be restored by such means as the promotion of greater awareness among the general public and national legislative bodies regarding the role of ODA;

- practical consideration be given to the use of ODA for leveraging private capital flows for sustainable development objectives, particularly supporting foreign direct

investments that involve the transfer of cleaner and less energy- and resource-intensive technologies;

- national sustainable development strategies become a guiding framework for donor coordination;

- specific targets be established for the share of projects directly pursuing environmental and social goals, including education, in overall ODA flows;

- recipient countries formulate their requests on a multi-year basis.

17. International financial institutions (IFIs) and development agencies should continue to integrate the goals of sustainable development into their policies and lending practices. It must be ensured that all projects funded by such institutions are environmentally and socially sound. These organizations should enter into new partnerships for sustainable development—with governments, the private sector and NGOs. Furthermore, international financial institutions should establish guidelines to ensure that foreign direct investment is environmentally and socially responsible.

18. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) should be further supported and replenished with adequate resources so that it can assume a stronger role in supporting recipient countries in their efforts to fulfill their obligations under relevant conventions, including through funding of technology transfer.

19. Sustainable development activities of local authorities and communities as well as non-governmental organizations should receive adequate financial support from both national and international sources.

20. The effectiveness in the use of both domestic and international financial resources must be urgently raised. This calls for more participatory, accountable and transparent forms of governance at all levels, as well as effective administrative and managerial reforms.

21. Developed and developing countries need to adopt or strengthen policies and regulations, and create stronger incentives aimed at ensuring that private investments and capital flows contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. These may include relevant fiscal measures, credit policies and innovative economic instruments, including tax breaks, "green" credit lines, micro-financing, and environmental funds as well as public-private co-financing. Full account has to be taken of the Polluter Pays Principle. International institutions should provide for the exchange of national experiences in this area, promote best practices and consider possible means to support such measures and reforms through international cooperation.

22. Private companies, both individually and through their associations like the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, are urged to adopt further environmental guidelines and codes of conduct for business practices and investment. Environmentally responsible policies should become a basic norm for all private enterprises.

23. The reduction and eventual elimination of subsidies that are environmentally harmful and

have trade-distorting impacts could result in significant public funds being released and re-channeled to sustainable development needs and projects. The elimination of certain subsidies could not only provide these direct financial benefits, but may also greatly contribute to progress in the implementation of relevant international conventions, such as in the case of energy subsidies and the UNFCCC.

24. For the reduction of pollution originating from production and consumption, practical and careful consideration should be given to the tax incidences and eventual changes in the level of consumption of relevant goods and services resulting from various forms of levies in determining proper combination of taxes and levies.

25. Various innovative international financial instruments need to be further studied taking into full account considerations of equity. There is also a need to further consider the international application of such market-based mechanisms as tradable pollution permits, which have proven to be an effective means for combating certain types of pollutants at the national level and may be even more promising if applied internationally. However, all economic, environmental and institutional aspects of this concept need to be carefully examined before practical application.

26. Consideration should be given to a proposal to establish, under the auspices of the CSD, an Intergovernmental Panel on Finance which could further examine various financial aspects of sustainable development, including innovative financial mechanisms, and provide for a dialogue on these matters with the representatives of the private sector and the NGOs.

B. Technology Transfer

27. The transfer of and cooperation related to environmentally sound technologies is essential to a worldwide transition towards sustainable development. In spite of some encouraging developments that have occurred since UNCED, particularly within the private sector, the promise of Rio regarding the preferential treatment of developing countries in terms of technology transfer has not yet been realized .

28. Technology transfer should span the spectrum of corrective, reductive, preventive, mitigative and adaptive technologies. It should serve broader goals of disseminating and applying technologies which are cleaner and less energy- and material-intensive, thus promoting sustainable development. Furthermore, technology transfer should not be limited to industry, but should also extend to agriculture, transport, fisheries and other sectors and services. Priority areas should include the sustainable management of water, land (particularly wasteland reclamation and the prevention of land degradation) and forests, as well as the cleaner, more efficient and safer generation of energy, including the broader use of renewable sources.

29. Promising approaches in technology transfer include:

- a "win-win" approach which leads to both reduction of production costs and environmental protection (such as the application of energy conservation technologies);

- the transfer of management systems and processes taking into account the "total life cycle" approach;

- enhancing local knowledge and building local capacities for the absorption and use of technologies, including the development of relevant technical and managerial skills. International organizations should support efforts in this area. In particular it is proposed that UNEP and UNDP jointly formulate a ten-year Action Plan for capacity-building towards managing technological change for the period 1997-2006;

- taking full account of local conditions and local environmental management systems;

- strengthening systems for the protection of intellectual property rights in developing countries;

- the promotion of South-South cooperation and exchanges of regional experiences;

- broader participation of civil society, including local authorities, NGOs and citizens, particularly women, in relevant decision-making processes;

- adoption of measures that will prohibit the transfer of those technologies known to be highly-polluting, dangerous to health and cause irreversible damage to the ecosystem.

30. Partnerships between developed and developing countries play a crucial role in technology transfer, cooperation and capacity-building. Though in principle technology is transferred in business-to-business transactions or as part of investment strategy, governments of both developed and developing countries should play an important role to ensure that technology transfer is consistent with the goals of sustainable development. This could be achieved through the adoption of policies and regulations aimed at creating conditions and providing incentives that promote environmentally responsible investment and transfer cleaner technologies while stimulating local demand for such technologies. The best practices and successful experiences of the private corporations should be disseminated more broadly. Business associations can play a most useful role in this regard.

31. Equally important is the promotion of private-public partnerships, both within and among countries, which could provide a crucial and mutually-beneficial link between the potential of the private sector and the role of government in the area of technology transfer. Attention should be also given to small and medium-size enterprises.

32. In view of deterioration of urban environment quality in many developing countries, it becomes essential to transfer technologies, information and know-how on sustainable urban planning and infrastructure development, especially in the areas of transportation, energy and water supply, sewage and solid waste management. Bearing in mind significant expertise in these areas accumulated by local authorities in developed countries, relevant partnerships between local governments from developed and developing countries are strongly encouraged. Furthermore, the promotion of cooperation between local authorities and local industries is essential.

33. In those areas which are less attractive in terms of private sector investment, ODA can perform an important role in financing technology transfer to developing countries. Potential areas of application include technologies to clean up existing production (particularly large-scale

production) as well as the provision of "seed" funding to facilitate private investments based on environmentally sound technology.

34. The establishment of national and regional environmentally sound technology (EST) centers and model projects offer promising opportunities to support both the transfer of environmentally sound technology and exchange of relevant information and experiences. EST centers could also provide a national/regional focal point for international networking in this field.

35. "Activities implemented jointly" in order to comply with the provisions of the UNFCCC should be seen as important vehicles for the transfer of relevant technologies.

36. To help further promote cooperation and transfer of environmentally sound technologies for poverty eradication, consideration could be given to establishing a Global Green Corps as part of the United Nations Volunteer system.

C. Reform of Production and Consumption Patterns.

37. Sustainable development calls for a fundamental reform of present production and consumption patterns. Developed countries must take the lead in this area.

38. Internalization of environmental costs and rationalization of product prices and goods and services, together with the promotion of eco-efficiency, are at the heart of policies aimed at making consumption and production patterns more sustainable. Environmentally sustainable production and consumption are achievable and need not hamper economic development as they promote new markets and new business opportunities while enhancing individual quality of life.

39. Unsustainable consumption patterns, common among today's developed nations, are also occurring among affluent income groups in developing countries experiencing rapid economic growth.

40. Reform in unsustainable consumption patterns will have to be based upon an examination of the values which underlie human society. In this context, the participants welcomed the Benchmark Draft of the Earth Charter adopted by the Rio+5 Forum.

41. Advertising and mass media play an important role in shaping consumer attitudes as well as disseminating information on consumption and production patterns.

42. Governments should promote sustainable consumption through the adoption of relevant policies and creating economic incentives/disincentives. Governments should also set an example in this area through a greening of their own activities in such areas as procurement.

43. Progress towards sustainable production and consumption requires full involvement of local authorities, the private sector, citizens' groups and other stakeholders. Local level initiatives, including those in Japan, to promote sustainable communities provide an encouraging example. The exchange of knowledge and experience in this area should be pursued through "partner cities."

44. The achievement of sustainable development depends upon citizen awareness that encourages environmentally responsible consumerism and personal behavior, exerts an influence on the political process, and encourages manufacturers to pursue environmentally sound production techniques and products. To raise such awareness:

- Education for sustainability should comprise not only sustainable practices such as recycling and conservation, but should strive also to instill in students a respect for nature and an interdisciplinary approach that integrates environmental, economic and social issues. Environmental education for children not only develops long-term sustainable habits, but has also proven to give rise to the phenomenon of "children teaching adults" in the home. Similarly, educational facilities and resources should be applied to the environmental education not only of children, but of adults as well. The encouragement of lifelong education in sustainability must be viewed as a responsibility of government at all levels;

- Information transparency and exchange should be encouraged. Public access to information regarding both product and production processes should be shared more effectively in a transparent manner among all stakeholders, including governments, industry, and the consumer. This should be reflected in full product labeling and Right-to-Know legislation.

45. Responsible production, including the encouragement of "green" product production, "total life cycle" responsibility, sourcing from sustainable suppliers, and the rejection of intentional planning for obsolescence, is essential.

46. Responsible production should be encouraged by economic and regulatory instruments that create relevant incentives. Furthermore, it is important to promote greater corporate accountability and responsibility.

47 Rapidly growing industries such as tourism should be based upon sustainable principles from the outset.

48 To promote sustainable production and consumption in an effective manner, it is necessary to develop indicators which measure sustainability of production and consumption and to further establish measurable targets at national, industrial, individual industry and office levels. It is also required to further develop evaluation methods such as life cycle assessments (LCA).

D. Science/Technology and Information/Communications

49. Science plays an important role in reducing lingering uncertainties in global environmental problems and change. International collaborative research should be strengthened so as to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency

50. There is a need, however, for new initiatives in the area of science and research in order to meet the challenges of the next century. Interested nations are invited to take the lead in formulating such initiatives. It is important to ensure that such initiatives:

- involve the best specialists from both developed and developing countries as well as multilateral organizations and the private sector;

- be adequately and rigorously planned; and

- be coordinated with related activities already underway.

51. Given the recent initiatives launched by Japan since Rio and in view of the country's high level commitment to research in the global environmental field, the first of such programs should be launched and overseen by Japan, but with the full involvement of several other countries and multilateral organizations.

52. It is important to foster research that links physical, biological and social sciences. The meeting supported Japan's establishment of a new research institute for global environmental strategies. The development of an international network of such research organizations should be encouraged with a view towards promoting long-term consistency in strategic studies.

53. Regional networks for global change research, such as the Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN), the Inter American Institute for Global Change (IAI), the European Network for Research in Global Change (ENRICH) and the International Arctic/Pacific Research Center, need to be strengthened. Their activities should be further developed as part of a permanent framework to promote joint monitoring projects.

54. Capacity-building, targeting areas such as the ability of research to support sustainable development at the local level in developing countries, is needed.

55. While advanced research is important, traditional and indigenous technologies and knowledge can play an important role in resolving environmental problems and devising sustainable solutions.

56. The initiatives of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) should be commended in view of the fact that the IPCC has linked scientific outcomes on climate change with policy-making. The application of such mechanisms to other environmental fields should be considered.

57. International financial institutions, in partnership with bilateral donors and NGOs, should establish a "knowledge network" which provides information for policy-making, including lessons learned and best practices.

58. Greater resources should be invested in the promotion of global environmental research including the prevention of natural disasters. Appropriate funding should be secured through both national budgets and various international sources including international financial institutions and ODA.

59. Telecommunications systems have the potential to become epoch-making tools in promoting the participation of all sectors and individuals in policies for sustainable development. Advances in transportation and telecommuting could help people shift to low-impact lifestyles. Considering the significant impacts of telecommunication upon society, the meeting recognized that it is important to deepen understanding of telecommunication's positive and negative environmental impacts.

60. The meeting stressed the importance of developing environmental information systems which enable as many people as possible to utilize and participate in them. These may include the use of the Internet and the development of databases, multimedia virtual laboratories, electronic museums and knowledge networks. This could promote better understanding among decision-makers and citizens and build support for investment, changes, and action needed for sustainable development. Yet as the quantity of available information rises, the discernment of reliable information grows in importance.